

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 16, 2001

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Over the past few weeks, we have come together to address the terrorist attacks that have shaken our nation. During this critical time we've been pleased to work in unison with your Administration on measures to address national priorities. We're eager to continue work in this manner.

It is in this light that we respectfully ask your assistance in prevailing upon the Department of Justice to drop its appeal in *California v. Norton*, a federal court case regarding oil and gas exploration off California's coast.

The Department of Justice appealed Judge Claudia Wilken's order in *California v. Norton* to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Judge Wilken's order prohibits the extension of existing offshore oil leases in California the State and the federal government complete their environmental reviews. We believe that the Mineral Management Service must provide justification for the extension of current leases under the National Environmental Protection Act. Furthermore, the State of California must have the opportunity to evaluate these leases to determine whether or not they are consistent with the California Coastal Management Program (CCMP). These reviews ought to be completed before any further steps toward drilling are contemplated.

We continue to have deep concerns about oil and gas drilling off California's coast. This is a bipartisan position among the State's political leaders. In a June 1st letter to Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, Secretary of State Bill Jones, the State's highest-ranking Republican wrote, "One of California's greatest resources is our coastal zone. While it is the responsibility of our national leaders to pursue a comprehensive policy to ensure an adequate supply of energy for the future of our economy, it is our responsibility to ensure that a national energy policy also protects the beauty of California's coastline for children and grandchildren."

We concur.

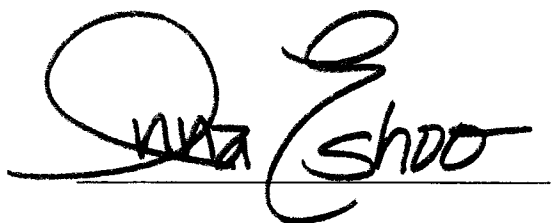
California's coastline is among the most picturesque in the world, drawing countless visitors each year and helping to support a \$75 billion tourist industry. Our waters are also the source of a wide variety of marine wildlife, which supports many industries, as well as scientific research, in our State. Offshore drilling endangers these resources. For the relatively small amount of crude oil available (at most, enough oil to supply California's refineries for two years), drilling off the coast of California is not a good deal for the future of our State or our country.

It was for this reason that many of us wrote to you on May 25th, urging you not to modify the existing moratoria on outer continental shelf drilling. These concerns are not unique. They are shared by many others in Congress, and they have led bipartisan majorities to vote to ban coastal drilling in Florida and Michigan.

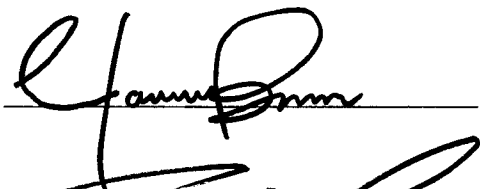
Ensuring an adequate supply of energy is critical to ensuring economic growth now and in the future. But we remain deeply concerned that the risk to California's coast and economy through future offshore oil drilling could actually threaten our economy. Putting aside this court challenge would be a positive demonstration of our mutual commitment to national unity.

We ask you to keep these thoughts in mind, and ask that you do all you can to uphold Judge Wilken's order. Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your reply and to working with you on important national issues.

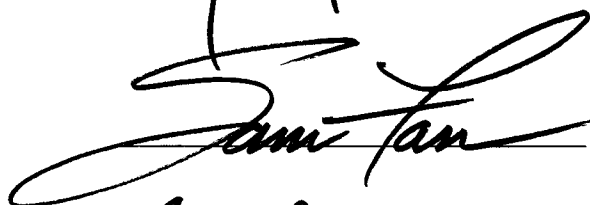
Sincerely,



Leis Capps



Ellen Fauscher



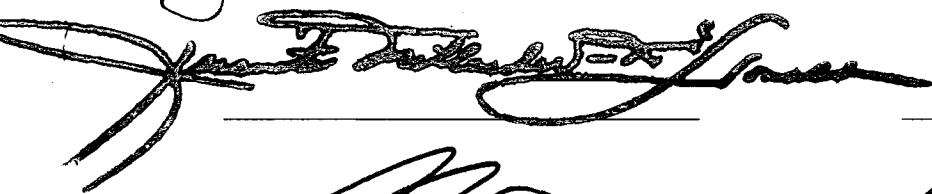
Laetta Sanchez

Brad Sherman

Lisa Davis

Grace J. Napolitano

Mike Thompson



Joe Foffe



Mike Hard

Barbara Lee

Doug A. Wilson

Howard Berman

Tom Lantos

Lynn Cheney

~~George Miller~~

George Miller

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Nancy Pelosi

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Jane Harman